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THE MUSICAL TIMES, And Singing Class Circular.

AUGUST 1st, 1855.

HAYDN'S MASSES.

Contributed by E. HOLMES.

INTRODUCTION.

NAMES so associated as those of Haydn and Mozart by the fame of their productions, by numerous kindred feelings, and by the ties of a friendship alike honorable to them as artists and as men, naturally lead to the consideration of some points of contrast between their lives. The career of Haydn was that of a man self-educated in music; commencing amidst the trials and straits of poverty, it ended in prosperity. Born at Rohrau, on the confines of Hungary, in 1732, Haydn entered life in a very humble sphere, his father being by occupation a wheelwright and the parish sexton of the district.

All the family were great amateurs; the father played the harp and the mother sung; and at the Sunday concerts which they got up at home, the child Francis Joseph received his first bias to music, being at this time accustomed to lead the orchestra with two sticks, upon which he performed in the manner of a violin. Even in the maturity of his genius, when he had heard all that was excellent in music, and was himself acknowledged the greatest master of his time, Haydn remembered the singing of his mother, and spoke of it with a kind of rapture. Her untaught accents of feeling made so strong an impression on him, that the whole experience of a long professional life failed to obliterate them. Haydn was twenty-four years old when Mozart, whom he survived for eighteen years, entered upon the stage of the world, and in this period, as it happens to the ingenuous who "gladly learn and gladly teach," the master became the scholar.

Mozart received every advantage of music from his birth. The son of an accomplished musician, an infant prodigy carried throughout the courts of Europe, and placed in contact with the first men of the age, he received the nurture of a prince; acquiring at the same time habits of elegance and expense, which afterwards told severely on him, particularly when he had the charge of a family. His life began in sunshine, and closed in clouds and storms. He depended upon the public, and yet his genius so far outstripped public taste, that at last he was left in a manner alone,—reduced to serve the ball-room for mere existence. The fear that so great a genius might be prematurely lost for want of due encouragement, made Haydn in one of his letters wish himself a king, that he might have the plea-

sure of recognizing and rewarding merit. Having himself entered into that haven of rest,—the well-paid and assured post of Kapell Meister, he could not see Mozart exposed to all the difficulties of a precarious professional existence without feelings of interest and sympathy.

But while Mozart was yet under the wing of his father, indulging in happy dreams of the future, Haydn was encountering the greatest difficulties to which sordid poverty can expose the friendless youth of genius. The term of manhood found him still exposed to such trials of his perseverance and endurance, that music cannot produce a more beautiful record of devotion to it; indeed, such a career is hardly to be conceived, unsupported by the consciousness of a great destiny and its "secret sustainings from within."

Alone in Vienna, a chorister of St. Stephen's, scantily supported by his office, we first meet him a boy among boys, playing in the Platz with his companions—but running into the cathedral when *he heard the sound of the organ*. That was his first distinction. On the breaking of his fine treble voice he has no means of support, but is compassionated by a poor wig maker, who for the love of music establishes him in his house in a garret on the sixth floor, of which the most valuable piece of furniture is an old broken-down harpsichord. Here he works day and night to qualify himself as a player and teacher, and to produce the means of paying his weekly rent. His hours of solitude were sometimes divine; alone with his instrument—"seated at my harpsichord," he has himself said, "I did not envy the condition of monarchs." In the severity of winter he sometimes passed days in bed to save the expense of fuel—adding to his knowledge, however, by studying books of theory, which he had picked up at stalls. His greatest day in his garret seems to have been when the first six sonatas of Emanuel Bach fell into his hands. He did not rise from the harpsichord till he had played them all through. The ideas which he gained from this author he has candidly acknowledged; they probably revealed to him the secret of his own power, and of the revolution in music which he was to effect.

By degrees the condition of Haydn somewhat improved. He played the first violin at the church of the Order of Mercy; on Sundays and fête days he took the organ in the chapel of Count Haugwitz; he had pupils for the piano and singing. One of these was Madlle. Martinez, the niece of Metastasio. This lady played the piano so beautifully, that in after years Mozart took pleasure in performing with her his four-hand pieces and M.S. duets. From Metastasio, with whom he now inhabited the same house, he gained instruction in the rules affecting the fine arts in general, and some knowledge of the Italian language.

Through him, also, he was introduced into the household of the ambassador of the Venetian States, where the celebrated Porpora instructed the lady of the mansion. To ingratiate himself with this master, and to gain what he could from him, in the principles of Italian singing, and the art of accompaniment, Haydn performed extraordinary services. He rose early every morning, his biographers inform us, "to brush the clothes, black the shoes, and comb the wig of Porpora," submitting in return to many injurious and rude speeches; but in the end he softened the crabbed old Italian, who, acknowledging his talent, gave him good advice. Nothing could impede the progress of a youth so resolved. Haydn had by this time published several compositions, and one of his sonatas fell by chance into the hands of Countess Thun, who sent for the author. Haydn appeared before her very poorly dressed. She looked surprised, and inquired for Haydn. "I am he, Madam." "But the Haydn I want is the composer of this sonata." "It is myself." After some explanation, the Countess extended her protection to him, and engaged him to give her lessons in singing and playing. This lady, who was extremely devoted to music, is the second of the pupils of Haydn who became intimately connected with Mozart. The Countess Thun, Mozart describes in his letters as the most charming lady he had ever known; it was she who lent him her piano to play upon at his first concert in Vienna.

Haydn was near thirty years of age before he surmounted the difficulties of an unappointed composer's life. Thus until within a term of five years he had to contend with nearly equal adversity to Mozart, though his hard life in the beginning had probably made him more prudent in his expenses. The burthen of the song of his daily existence was however still,—poverty—necessity. When, about 1759, he was received into the establishment of Prince Antony Esterhazy, and kissed hands on receiving the appointment, the Prince is said to have concluded his address to him thus: "Get a new coat, a wig and buckles, a collar and red heels to your shoes; but I particularly desire that they may be of a good height, in order that *your stature may correspond with your intelligence*; you understand me, go your way, and every thing will be given you." This rough, but kindly-meant speech, actually heralded support and quiet to Haydn for the remainder of his days. He was forthwith installed second professor of music, and his new comrades, on account of his swarthy complexion, called him *the Moor*. He lived for the future among an orchestra, composing with great industry and regularity every day, and his works began to appear in public with rapidity.

His first symphonies were engraved in Paris, in 1766. Mozart was at this time on his great

tour with his father, mother, and sister, through France, England, and Holland. He must have known many of Haydn's works, symphonies, and violin quartets, through his intimacy with Michael Haydn, the brother of Joseph, who was his comrade on the establishment of the Archbishop of Salzburg. The spirit and originality of these productions had probably their influence on him. But the first great instrumental score, in which flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, trumpets, &c., were combined with the stringed instruments in one symmetrical system, developing the grand secret of modern art, the effect of holding notes in all positions of the harmony, was the work of Mozart. The Paris symphony, written before the overture to *Idomeneo*, of about the date, '78-80, establishes Mozart's priority of invention in regard to the full development of the orchestra. After showing how melodies should be doubled in the wind instruments, the good effect of octaves and doublings, and the magnificence of the inverted *pedale*, there was little for others to do but to accept his model and conform their ideas to it as well as they could. Haydn's symphonies of '66 were the best (says Fétis) that he had produced previous to his visit to London in '92, the year after Mozart's death. Then came the twelve symphonies for Salomon's concerts, in many of the slow movements of which there is a style influenced by recollections of Mozart. Then came also his exquisite English songs—"Canzonets"—his *Orfeo*, and a multitude of things which showed consummate genius and the last refinements of melody. His sacred symphonies for Cadiz, called—"the seven last words," were considered by Haydn among his best productions. The date of these is 1784—they were at first purely instrumental, but words were afterwards added to them by Michael Haydn.

The true immortality of Haydn is founded on his eighty instrumental quartets. In felicity of adaptation to quartet composition, his genius transcended even that of Mozart; he produced with greater facility, more copious variety, and more rapidity. His range of thoughts is loftier in these miniature productions—he is fuller of the fire of invention—his *adagios* are more exquisite in the melody and profound in their character than in his orchestral works. What a pity that Haydn's quartets are comparatively unknown! In the dramatic style, he felt himself weak; and the fire at Eisenstadt, which consumed a good number of his operas, can scarcely be regretted.

Haydn's Masses, though mostly written for more complete orchestras than Mozart's, and more equally finished, do not contain the same inspirations of genius. In the sublimity of the Sanctus, and the angelical character of the Benedictus, he falls short in comparison; nor are his Kyries generally so beautiful. The religious elevation expressed by Mozart, in harmonies and

modulations which raise the soul on wings, is deficient in the genius of Haydn,—or he so seldom reaches it, that when he does it is an accident. He had little of melancholy in his nature; and he seldom attains to grandeur. His melodies, however, possess sweetness, elegance, and tenderness; his accompaniments abound in resources of fancy; and the clearness and effect of his part-writing is not to be excelled. As a fugue writer he was Mozart's equal. These composers of kindred soul on many points, appear to differ in the Mass thus—Mozart has the superiority in grandeur and in poetic sentiment, but his great movements are found at intervals; Haydn maintains excellence at a more uniform rate, and displays throughout a more careful finishing. The fault of his lively movements is occasionally to be too secular, with a tincture of vulgarity in the melodies.

The gaiety and secularity of the Mass-music produced in Germany towards the close of the last century, will cease to astonish us when we remember that the Catholic service admitted instrumental symphonies, and that many of Haydn's early works of this kind were produced for the festivals of his church. Mozart composed orchestral sonatas for the same purpose; and even the Protestant service of this period required a voluntary after the second lesson, which was usually very florid. An apology has been made by a countryman of Haydn for the excess of florid accompaniment in the Masses.

"A German requires a stronger physical effort, more bustle, and more noise to move him than any other creature upon earth. We drink too much beer; you must fairly flay us if you wish to tickle us."

These Masses were evidently composed to render attendance at church agreeable; and the latitude allowed to expression admitted almost any style of music which would please. Where pleasure is arbiter, the art is sure to flourish. The modern Mass, which supplanted the ancient Italian church music *à la Palestrina*, helped on the effects of the symphony and the drama, just as with us in England, at the Restoration, efforts to please the king produced the solo anthem, and so extended recitative and the powers of poetical expression. Timely changes maintain the vitality and assist the progress of music. We are always safe in them when they are directed by men of genius, faithful to their calling, who prefer some risk of blame for innovation, to preserving formulas, and walking securely in the ways of their forefathers.

Haydn's life may be divided into three epochs—his youth—his period of service with Esterhazy—and the time passed at Vienna on his return from England to his death, when it is known he was chiefly occupied with the *Creation* and the *Seasons*. Of his works during all this period,

tried by the highest standard of music, it may be said that he was less than Mozart in great things—but as great in small things. The airs and trios of the *Creation* surpass the choruses, and the quartets of Haydn make a deeper impression than the symphonies. This great composer and amiable man died at the village of Gumpendorf, in 1809, in his 77th year, while the French were bombarding Vienna.

(To be continued.)

MUSIC AMONG THE POETS AND POETICAL WRITERS.

By MARY COWDEN CLARKE.

(Continued from page 75.)

The lark vies with the nightingale, in the number and enthusiasm of her poetic chroniclers.

"The busy lark, the messenger of day,
Saluteth in her song the morrow grey."—*Chaucer*.

"The lark, the herald of the morn."—*Shakespeare*.

"The lark, whose notes do beat
The vaulty heaven so high above our heads."
Shakespeare.

"The lark makes sweet division."—*Shakespeare*.

"Hark! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings."
Shakespeare.

"Ne'er could Fancy bend the buoyant lark
To melancholy service—hark! O hark!

The daisy sleeps upon the dewy lawn,
Not lifting yet the head that evening bowed;
But *He* is risen, a later star of dawn,
Glittering and twinkling near yon rosy cloud;
Bright gem instinct with music, vocal spark;
The happiest bird that sprang out of the Ark!

Hail, blessed above all kinds!—Supremely skill'd
Restless with fixed to balance, high with low.
Thou leav'st the halcyon free her hopes to build
On such forbearance as the deep may show;
Perpetual flight, unchecked by earthly ties,
Leav'st to the wandering bird of paradise.

Faithful, though swift as lightning, the meek dove;
Yet more hath Nature reconciled in thee;
So constant with thy downward eye of love,
Yet, in aerial singleness, so free;
So humble, yet so ready to rejoice
In power of wing and never-wearied voice.

How would it please old Ocean to partake,
With sailors longing for a breeze in vain,
The harmony thy notes most gladly make
Where earth resembles most his own domain!
Urania's self might welcome with pleas'd ear
These matins mounting towards her native sphere.

Chanter by heaven attracted, whom no bars
To day-light known deter from that pursuit;
'Tis well that some sage instinct, when the stars
Come forth at evening, keeps Thee still and mute;
For not an eyelid could to sleep incline,
Wert thou among them, singing as they shine!"
Wordsworth.